



Graduate Programs in Education
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Saint Michael's College

Graduate Education Newsletter

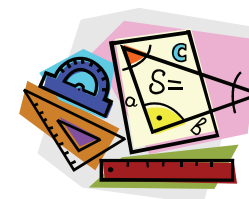
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FALL 2011

SCHEDULE CHANGE FOR GED 530

We have made a change in the semester offerings for GED 530: Literacy in the Middle & Secondary Schools. We will offer GED 530 in the fall semester only. It will NOT be offered summer 2012. Please contact your advisor if this course is on your summer plan so we can discuss options.

Thanks very much!!



• **Registration now open for matriculated students for Spring 2012! Register online at www.smcvt.edu/graduate/course**

• **"Like us" on Facebook for updates at www.facebook.com/SaintMikesEducation**

• **Remember to complete candidacy forms after 6 credits**

2011-2012 Vermont School Superintendents' Summer Institute By Brian O'Regan

The second annual New Superintendents' Institute continues to offer recently appointed Vermont school superintendents information and support in their local leadership roles. The Institute is a four day summer program with five additional meeting dates scheduled during the current school year. The program has involved nearly twenty new educational leaders over the past two years representing eleven of Vermont's fourteen counties. The purpose of the program is to provide superintendents new to Vermont, or new to the position, an opportunity to acquire current information on topics such as: education law and recent legislation; Vermont's education finance system and local school budgeting; collective bargaining issues; policy, human resource issues; and research related to the role of leadership and student learning.

Additionally, the program allows participants to become familiar with statewide leaders (e.g. Commissioner of Education, education association executive directors, and veteran colleagues) and to further develop a professional network within the state. Numerous guest presenters provide the basis for this expanded network. More recently, the Institute has combined efforts with the Vermont Superintendents' Association to provide more in-depth work sessions on compelling problem-solving topics identified by participants.

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Kate Ellingson, awarded Teacher of the Year at Fairfax Elementary School, where she teaches third grade.



GED's New Graduate Assistant

Graduate Education would like to welcome Sarah Smith as our Graduate Assistant for the 2011-2012 year. Sarah graduated Magna Cum Laude in 2009 from Saint Michael's and is continuing her education towards her Master's in Special Education and K-8 Licensure. While an undergraduate Sarah was the Director of Best Buddies through Mobilization of Volunteer Efforts (MOVE), a mentor at King Street Youth Center, a Service-Learning Scholar along with many community service student leader roles including Pre-Orientation Weekend (POW) and international service trips, to name just a few! Before beginning her graduate studies, Sarah worked as an Autism Interventionist at the Howard Center in Burlington.

With her strong communication and organizational skills Sarah is a wonderful addition to the Graduate Education department. Welcome Sarah!

NEW!!! Knight Vision Academic Evaluation By Karen Donovan

If you are a student who started under the SMC 2010 Catalog, please be sure to check your Program Evaluation on Knight Vision. This allows you to **view the specific course requirements for your licensure and/or Master's programs. It will let you know which courses you have and have not yet taken so you can plan with your advisor to complete your program.**

Instructions: Go to Knight Vision, log in (if you forgot your password please contact the IT Helpdesk at 654-2020), under Academic Evaluation select "Program Evaluation", select the program to view and click submit at the bottom of the page. It takes a minute to come up!

Thanks to all in the Registrar's Office for mak-

Congratulations Newly Hired GED Students!

Kristyn Achilich (Dumont) Science, Sanborn Regional High School, NH

Justin Bouvier Secondary Math, Mt. Abe

Annie Brabazon Librarian K-8, Grand Isle

Amy Cole Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Chittenden East Supervisory Union

Seth Cole Technology Integration Specialist, Kittery, ME

Gillian Conant Special Educator K-2, Essex Elementary

Aaron Dickie Third grade, Grand Isle

Meghann Ellis Morrystown Elementary

Nicole Gorman Science, CVU High School

Laura Hall Spanish, Vermont Commons

Leisa Halligan EEE, J.J. Flynn Elementary School

Katie Herbert Outreach Advocate/Educator Voice Against Violence, St. Albans

Abigail Lanfear 7-8 teacher, St. Albans Town

Natalie LaRose 2/3 classroom, Sustainability Academy at Lawrence Barnes, Burlington

Kelsey Malbouef Second grade, Fairfield Elementary

Megan Marsh ESL, Concord School, Concord, NH

Rick McGraw Vice Principal, U-32 High School

Kate McKernan Residential Educator, Summer Session Director, Rock Point School,

Kim Means 7-8, Edmunds Middle School

Paul Morgan Student Monitor, BFA St. Albans

Jenn Nye Principal, Barre Town Elementary and Middle School

Gina O'Connor Special Educator, Milton

Elementary

Katri O'Neill Director of IT, Glen Lake Community Schools, Maple City Michigan

Alex Possidente Special Educator, South Burlington

Margaret Rocheleau Special Educator, Essex High School

Amy Savage Special educator, Barre Town

Matt Segel 5th grade, Shoreham Elementary

Kate Strauss English (grades 7-9),Whitcomb High School

Lee Twarog Title 1 teacher, Charlotte Central School

Elizabeth Waine Special Educator, J.J. Flynn Elementary School

Jennifer Young ESL, Colchester

Not listed? Email Sarah Smith at

New Spring Course Addresses the Needs of Struggling Adolescent Readers

By Kristin Gehsmann

Adolescent Literacy is identified by the International Reading Association as one of the hottest topics among teachers, researchers and other members of the literacy field. This emphasis comes with demands for higher literacy standards, increased graduation rates, and more focused classroom interventions to reduce special education referrals and better support struggling adolescent readers.

Saint Michael's College is proud to offer a new course to address the needs of these students, GED 607: Literacy Instruction for Struggling Adolescent Readers: Intervention and Classroom Practices. Students in this class will examine the research on intervention practices and programs for struggling adolescent readers and how to link assessment information to instruction for these students.

Professor Robert Schwartz, on leave from Oakland University in Michigan, designed the course and will be teaching it this spring. Bob is a past president of the Reading Recovery Council of North America, a teacher and researcher with publications on Response to Intervention (RTI), vocabulary, and comprehension instruction. He feels that "struggling adolescent readers are often working as hard or harder than their more successful peers. Unfortunately, they are not seeing the patterns that make learning easier and more efficient for their peers." Bob's expertise in narrowing the achievement gap is recognized across the country and beyond. We're very excited to welcome him to our community and he is equally eager to work with Vermont teachers to support the literacy and learning of their students.

If you're interested in the M. Ed. Reading Program, or if you're wondering how this course can fit into your program of study, please contact Kristin Gehsmann, Reading Program Coordinator, kgehsman@smcvt.edu.

Leadership and Learning: Principal Development Course

By Brian O'Regan

Over twenty principals in the Champlain Valley and Central Vermont area are participating in a new course entitled: Leadership and Learning – a year round three credit course designed to provide support and content knowledge to new and experienced elementary, high school, special education and technical center administrators. The Champlain Valley program is sponsored in conjunction with the Champlain Valley Education Development Center (CVEDC), the regional Education Service Agency (ESA). The Central Vermont program was established as a campus course based on regional interest.

Focus topics for the course include current research and best practice on topics including the development, supervision and evaluation of professional and support staff, strengths-based leadership, school finance and budget, policy development and legal requirements related to student/school based issues, statewide accountability systems, analysis of student performance outcomes and instructional program implications, human resources and operational management. A primary focus of the course is developing a systems approach to student learning and outcomes acknowledging the multiple constituent groups involved with today's schools.

Today's school based leadership roles are subject to multiple and, sometimes, challenging demands. The school year, monthly meeting program seeks to provide substantive content, new learning and problem solving opportunities for these practicing professionals.

Teaching: The Good the Bad and the Realistic By Anne Judson

Twenty people interested in teaching came to SMC to hear six current teachers and administrators from Chittenden County Schools, all of whom are St. Michael's graduates,—and represent the teaching areas of art, technology, special education, elementary, and secondary—talk honestly about what it's like today to work in the Vermont public school system. The presenters talked about the good, the bad, and the realistic about teaching. Student "ah hah" (student learning) moments was the main "good" theme teachers said helped them maintain their motivation to stay in education. The "bad," not surprisingly, was the little time to go to the bathroom and eat lunch, and sometimes difficult parents. The "realistic" aspects of teaching were explained as constant change, meeting the needs of all students, and expectations from multiple constituencies (students, parents, administration, and community). When asked what they would do if they weren't teaching, all presenters said they couldn't imagine doing anything else, even given all the challenges.

Creativity, Imagination and Spine

By Jonathan Silverman

A few Fridays ago I attended a panel on Imagination held at the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts. The panel consisted of multimedia artist Laurie Anderson, Dave Finney (President of Champlain College), Tiffany Bluemle (Executive Director of Vermont Works for Women), Jostein Solheim (C.E.O. of Ben & Jerry's), and moderator Jane Lindholm (VPR). The Lincoln Center Institute in New York City created the idea of having conversations in each state to discuss how imagination, creativity, and innovation are integral to so many parts of our society and to suggest ways to cultivate these qualities in schools.

I left this panel frustrated and invigorated. I felt frustrated because these presenters as well as many educators, philosophers, and artists remind us of our desperate need to respond to the many local and global social, economic, and environmental challenges. They concurred that our educational system which embraces unyielding rituals of schedule and bureaucracy, accentuates quantitative performance and product (over qualitative discernment and process), and passively accepts that paradigm immobility is not preparing students adequately for the 21st century. I was not surprised to hear about the mounting diminished opportunities for imagination.

On the other hand, I felt invigorated by the collective call for the power of imagination to make a difference in today's complex world. I heard affirmation for our honorable mission in education to become stronger in nourishing the imagination of students so they can perceive social and environmental concerns, empathize with those who are struggling, and be resourceful and discerning when suggesting innovative solutions. I was reminded how imagination helps us live with life's ambiguity, promotes constructive risk taking, develops critical thinking and expressive voice, and supports us to ask "what if" again and again. The panel shared their own stories of how they were inspired by teachers who gave them "freedom" and engaged them with relevant projects. Regrettably, I have few memories of teachers who led vibrant expeditions of learning where imagination was encouraged, engagement soared, and inquiry mattered. In retrospect these few teachers pushed me "beyond where the backyard ends and the road narrows" (Maxine Greene from *Re*



Sketch by
Jonathan
Silverman

leasing the Imagination). They were imaginative in their teaching. They taught me how lessons are carefully planned yet live in the moment. They brought out the artist in me but more importantly gave me my passion to humbly encourage the creativity and imagination of those I am fortunate to teach.

This semester I engaged my *Arts: the Creative Process* students in an on-line threaded discussion. I asked them to respond to questions such as:

- What spine do we have or not as a society to cultivate creativity?
- What are ways that you "blow the embers of curiosity" in your students?
- How does (individual or community) ritual promote and/or restrict creativity?

The responses of these graduate students who are current and prospective teachers affirm that the kind of teachers we need are those who can equate the creative spirit with perception and see rituals as a vehicle to opening spaces for imagination. They are convinced that imagination welcomes curiosity, inquiry, and empowerment. They believe that there is no spine when structure is stagnant and suppresses exploration and voice. There is spine when there is commitment to bring forth student ideas and wonder and, in concert with our Education Department's mission statement, a link between imagination, knowledge, and wisdom.

As members of the Saint Michael's Education Department Community we can follow the Lincoln Institute mission and carry on this conversation as we design curriculum, interact with students, and develop learning communities.

With the help of Professor Tim Whiteford I will soon post resources on creativity and imagination on the Education Department web site. <http://academics.smcvt.edu/twhiteford/index.htm>

Thanks to Amanda, Heather, Mary, Carrie, Molly, Katelyn, and May from the fall 2011 Arts: the Creative Process class for their insightful on-line threaded discussion.

The use of "spine" is taken from Twyla Tharpe's book [The Creative Habit](#).